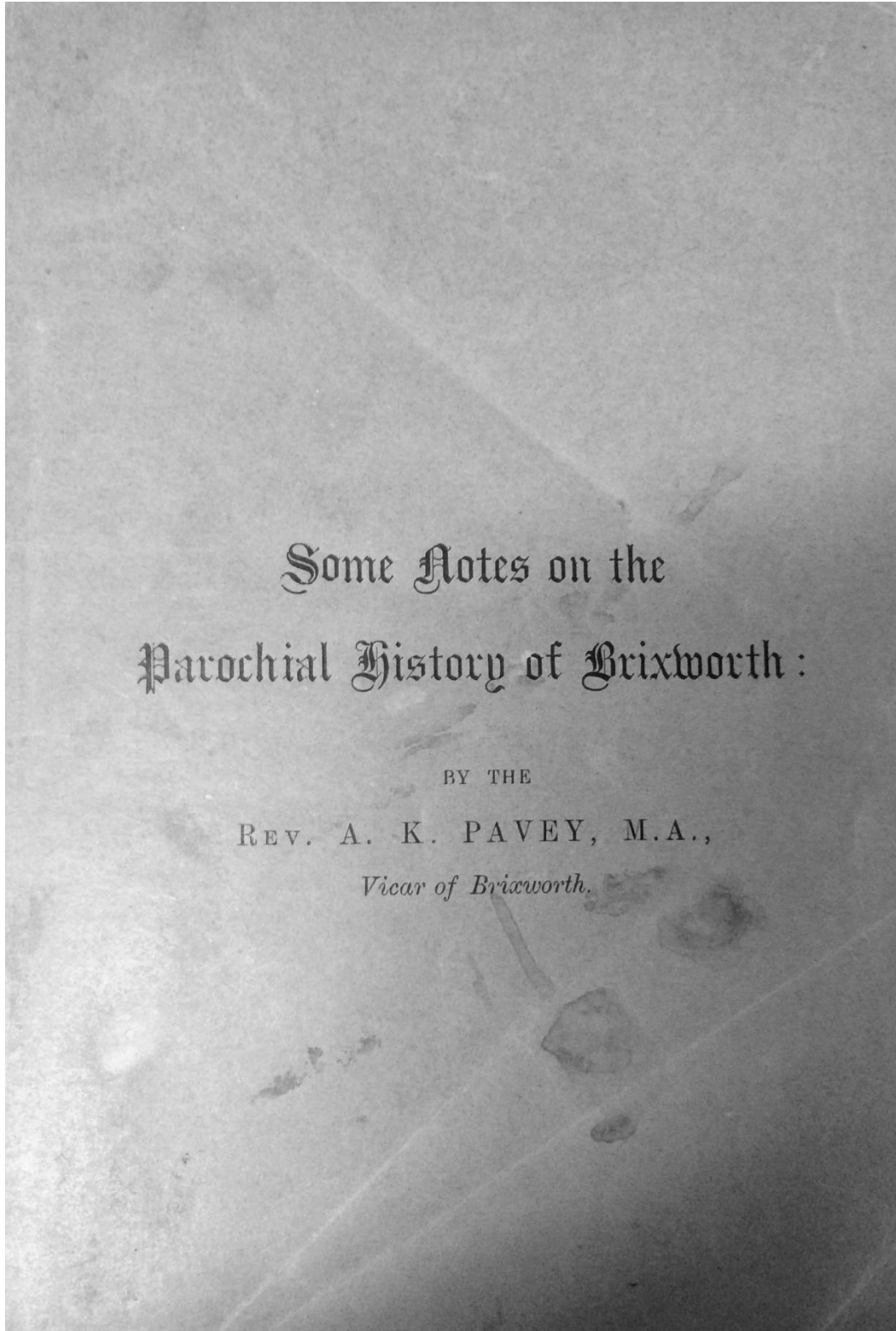


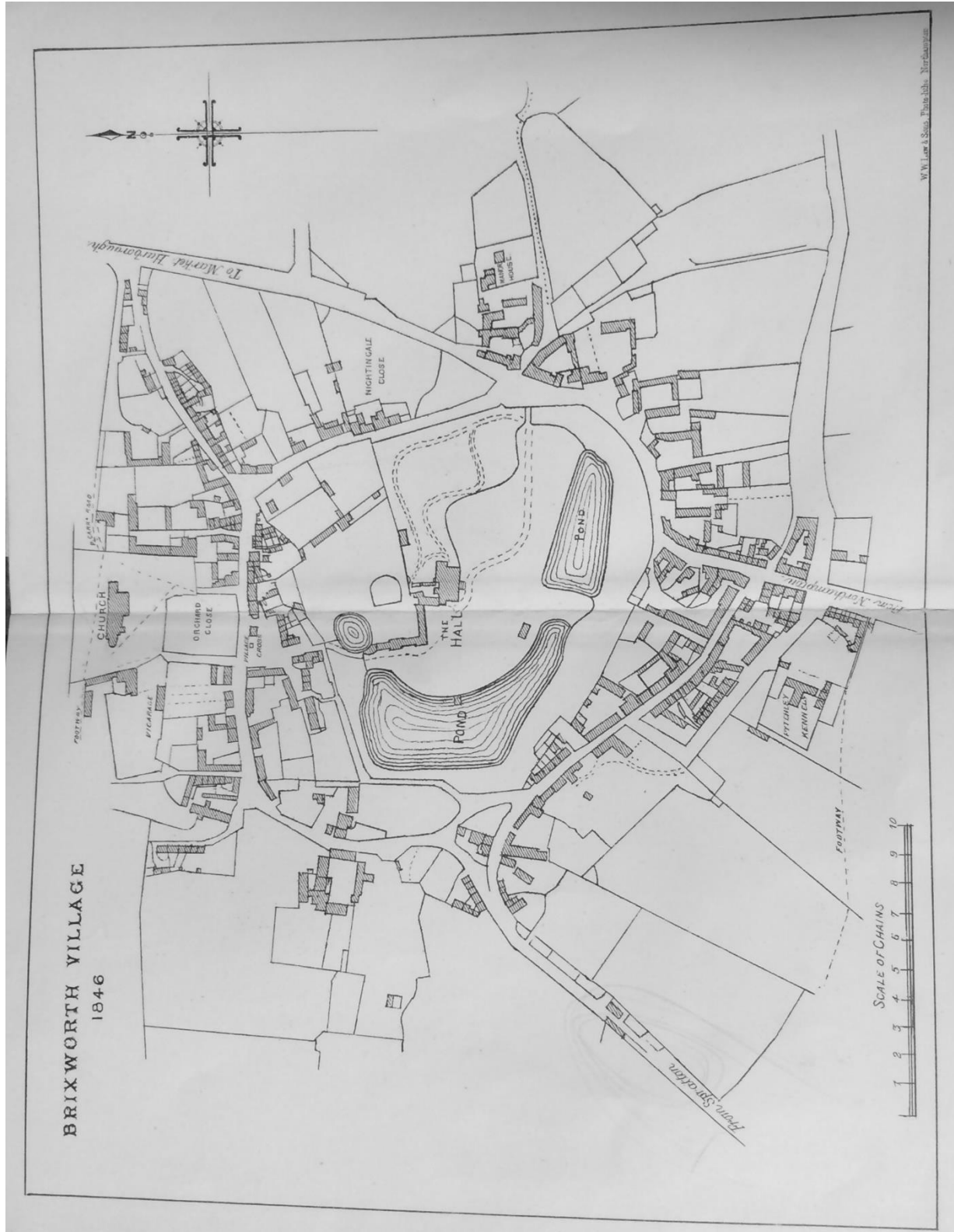
**'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey**

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

# Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth:

BY THE

REV. A. K. PAVEY, M.A.,  
*Vicar of Brixworth.*

THESE notes do not offer any suggestions upon those much-disputed points in connection with the history of this Church. What has been done towards grouping of similar characteristics is found in the comparative study of Saxon architecture by Mr. Micklethwaite in *The Architectural Journal*, December, 1896, as well as by Professor Baldwin Brown in his book on *The Arts in Early England* (1903).

These notes are therefore only an attempt to consider the particular influences (if any) at work in the parish of Brixworth; for some indications seem possible by which the existence of such a unique building as the church can be explained, if the circumstances which have been, or which could have been, associated with it, are examined.

1. *The Present Formation of the Parish.*—It will be noticed that while the church is situated upon high ground, the village is gathered round the Hall. This latter gives some signs of being the elevated site of a *Norman* occupation, as there are distinct evidences of a moat. Thus the *Saxon* church overlooks the site of the principal house; for though the Hall now occupies this site, yet the Manor House (so-called) will be found still further off and on the Eastern side of the old turnpike road leading from Northampton to Market Harborough. The present formation of the village seems therefore to be of *later origin* than the church.



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### 2 SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH.

2. *Another Settlement.*—Unfortunately, the ironstone workings have removed all evidences of another settlement, which might have corresponded to the church, both in its date and in its size and importance. But enough is known of a Saxon occupation in consequence of the "finds," which have taken place to the west of the church and in the direction of and beyond the Spratton Railway Station. Wells, remains of armour and implements have been met with, beside countless numbers of urns and of other earthenware; but very few of these latter have escaped destruction.\* The greater part of this site would be on the Eastern side of the valley, and tending to the South—evidently a sheltered position. But this arrangement of village and church would place them some distance apart, and it is generally noticed in this county that the village occupies a position southward of the church. Some connecting link, however, appears to have existed between the church and the Saxon settlement; for, until lately, a ditch of some size extended from the Market Harborough and Northampton Road, and passing the church, bore down towards the site near the present Spratton Station. The only remaining traces of this ditch are to be found in the boundary between the Glebe Allotments and the land once worked for ironstone, as well as in the boundary of "Linch Lane." This name may be a reminder of the boundary, which connected the Saxon Church with the Saxon settlement. On the site of the village the field names also bear a Saxon character. Of the three manors into which the lordship was divided, one is called *Wolfage*, and appeared as separate in the time of Henry VIII., and is entered in the Parish Registers as *Wolfage Park*. Surrounding the site of a house called *Wolfage*, which is shown on a map of 1688 to have been close to then existing ruins, are fields called *The Palace*, *The Palace End Rick*, and *The Palace Meadow*, as well as a mill, according to Bridges<sup>1</sup> called *Kingsmulne*. He also states that to *Wolfage* belonged part of the manor; and this seems to show an earlier settlement than the rest of the manor. The evidence appears sufficient to conclude that the church stood on its hill as at present, while the Saxon village nestled at some distance from it under the South-Western side of the valley, and that the church and village were connected by a boundary, "linch," or embankment and ditch.

3. *Why so far apart?*—This question appears to be satisfied by the one answer, that the Church or part of it was in existence *before* the founding of the Saxon village or settlement, or at least *before* the Saxon came to need a Saxon church. It may be asked whether the Saxon village occupied the site of an earlier settlement; at present there are no signs that the Saxons occupied a Roman site, perhaps,

(1) Bridges, Northants, vol. ii., p. 80.

## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH. 3

on account of most of the vestiges of Roman occupation being removed. They were thus able to settle on an entirely new and sheltered position. Here then we enter upon the debatable ground as to the origin, or the cause for the appearance, of the Roman bricks in the Saxon work of the church. Without going further into this question, authorities are satisfied that the greater part is Saxon, whilst the term "More Romano" seems to cover not only the style, but even the Pagan influence, which first selected so elevated a site.<sup>1</sup> This can be further shown to have been probable from traces of Roman occupation found in a field, which is only two fields distant on the north side of the church. The road to that field had been mended by the late occupiers (1902)—whose family had previously owned the land for many years—with the remains of Roman bricks, which had been turned up by the plough. Wells, too, have been searched, in which Samian pottery has been found. Roman hairpins and a bronze buckle have been picked up; and more awaits discovery, which may help towards some conclusion that the building now used from Saxon times as a church, was influenced first by Pagan Rome before it was rebuilt under the influence of Saxon Christianity. May we not consider that the road from Northampton to Market Harborough is of Roman origin, by the way in which it keeps a straight course up hill and down dale. If this could be established, then the question as to the selection of such an elevated site would date back to earlier than Saxon times; and this would give the reason why a boundary was necessary to unite two distant parts of the one village, and why the Saxons should use the site at all, viz., because part of the building was in position before their arrival.

4. *Why so Grand a Building?*—Even if it were granted that possibly some traces of Roman occupation may be found upon portions of the structure of Brixworth Church, we have still the remarkable fact that the Saxons were enabled to build so grand a structure. How they could do this may be due probably to the influences which were at work, when the first monks came to Brixworth from Medeshamstede (Peterborough) under the rule of Saxwulf, first Abbot, in 673, or of Cuthbaldus, his successor, in 675.<sup>2</sup> "So observant was he," wrote Gunton,<sup>3</sup> "in the practice of devotion, and withall so prudent in ecclesiastical affairs, that many other places were desirous of him for their Governour, which, because they could not obtain, they desired some of his appointing; whence *Thorney, Bricclesworth, Bredune, Wermundsey, Repingas, Wockingas*, and many other places were furnished with

(1) Theodore and Wilfrith (Browne) pp. 47-49.

(2) Dugdale p. 345.

(3) Gunton Let. pp. 6-237.



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### 4 SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH.

Abbots of his commending." The founding of the Monastery<sup>1</sup> at Brixworth has been placed about the year 690. This mention of Bricelesworth along with Repingas or Repton—the burial place of the Mercian Kings—and the tribal names of Wochingas or Woking and Wermondsey seems to give some reason why Brixworth should, at that early date, have so strong a claim upon the choice of the Abbot of Medeshamstede. For, under the guidance of Saxwulf, Peada, King of Mercia, had given land for the building of a monastery at Medeshamstede, and in 656 began to build the Saxon Church until his murder in 660. He was succeeded by his brother Wulphere, who had been converted to the Christian Faith by S. Finian. Notwithstanding all his Christian surroundings he reverted, and brought up his two sons, Rufine and Wulfade in heathenism. They in turn were brought under the influence of S. Chad, and even baptized at Medeshamstede, but only to suffer for the faith, for their father had them both murdered. Under the Christian influence of his wife, however, Wulphere confessed his crime, was restored to the communion of the Church by S. Chad, and also in expiation of it continued the work of building the monastery at Medeshamstede, begun by his brother Peada. The royal foundation of the monastery, and the claim of Bricelesworth upon the first Abbot may have some connection with that part of the manor called "Wolfage," to which reference has been made. If we have the names of chiefs in the settlements at Wochingas (Woking), and at Wermondsey (Varini),<sup>2</sup> why should not "Wolfage" be the name of the Saxon settlement at Bricelesworth, under the Chief—the King's son—Wulfade. And here we have a royal residence—a palace—and a king's mill.<sup>3</sup> And what could be more likely than that the edifice either of a restored building or of an altogether new one should have been built about that time. Thus it may have been that the unique and grand character of Brixworth Church was due to the influence and munificence of Mercian kings, and that the remains of some of these buildings are even now in existence.

5. *Brixworth and the Celtic Church.*—Wulphere appears to have come across two missionaries of the Celtic Church—Finian and Chad—in the course of his life. Thus it was under their influence, and that of the Northumbrian Church, that the Christian faith was introduced into Mercia. It might, however, be supposed that the Italian mission had some influence in this part of Mercia, in consequence of Wilfrid of York holding property at Oundle.<sup>4</sup> As far as Brixworth is concerned, the evidence seems

(1) W. de Grey Birch "Saxon Abbots," p. 6.

(2) Taylor, "Words and Places," pp. 83-4.

(3) According to the field names.

(4) Browne, pp. 47-49; Perry, vol. i., pp. 63-67.

## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH. 5

to shew that the first missionaries had been under the influence of the Celtic Church. In 1897 the base or part of a Saxon cross was found close to the church, on which is carved the struggle between Fenrir and Jormundgand. The subject is the same as



*Brixworth Saxon Stone.*

From Markham's *Stone Crosses of Northamptonshire*, 1901, p. 32.

appears on the famous "Fishing Stone" in Gosforth Church, Cumberland,<sup>1</sup> and the material (sand stone) is similar. Their discovery and apparent connection with the Celtic Church in the North of England may give some clue as to the nature and date of the Saxon eagle which was found in the west jamb of the Norman doorway, as fully described by the late Sir Henry Dryden.<sup>2</sup>

6. *Brixworth as a royal residence and under a changed name.*— If "Wolfage" be granted as the possible name of the Saxon settlement, near the present Spratton station and at some distance from the church, how are we to account for the change of name? The formation of the present village, as it has been noticed, points to a later date. "Wolfage" then would have received its name from "Wolfade," the murdered Christian son of Wolphere, King of the Mercians. Wolphere died<sup>3</sup> in 675, and was succeeded by his brother, Ætheldred. In 704<sup>4</sup> Ætheldred, son of Penda, King of the Mercians, assumed monkhood, and Cenred succeeded him, and retired to Rome, where he died in 709. He was followed by Ceolred,<sup>5</sup> who died in 716, when Æthelbald succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians, and held it forty-one years. During this period, 716-757, there appears to have been much trouble, for many battles are recorded. The result was that gradually the kingdom of the West Saxons rose to supremacy in opposition to

(1) Parker's *Ancient Crosses at Gosforth Churchyard*, pp. 75, &c.

(2) *Arch. Report*, vol. xxii., part I., p. 78 (date 1893).

(3) *Anglo-Sax. Chron.*, p. 58. (4) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 68. (5) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 70.



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### 6 SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH.

the kingdom of Mercia. The turning point was reached<sup>1</sup> in 752 or 754, at the battle of Burford, when the overthrow of Mercia was complete, as Æthelbald<sup>2</sup> was put to flight, slain at Leckington, and buried at Repton. King Offa succeeded in 755, and continued to reign over Mercia for sometime. During his rule the relations with the kingdom of Wessex were strengthened by the marriage of Brictric (787) with Eadburh, the king's daughter.<sup>3</sup> This marriage had great influence in deciding upon the succession to the throne of Wessex upon the abdication of king Ina. His reign, 688 to 726, was filled with wars, though under his rule the West Saxon kingdom was consolidated. To this condition of things Brictric succeeded, though he was opposed by Egbert, a lineal descendent of the royal house. Offa joined his future son-in-law and Egbert fled to France. Brictric<sup>4</sup> was supreme in 784 or 787, and reigned sixteen years. A coin of his is described by Mr. Walker in Camden's *Britannia* (Plate II., No. 3).<sup>5</sup> Notice is found in Cox's *Northamptonshire*<sup>6</sup> of the intercourse between the King of the West Saxons and the Kings or Earls of Mercia, for he writes: "Under the *Mercian* Kings, this County and others under their jurisdiction were governed by the Earls of *Mercia*. Hugh, surnamed the GREAT, who being Patron of *Tewksbury* Abbey, in *Gloucestershire*, allowed that Brictric, King of the *West Saxons*, should be buried in the Chapel of the Holy Virgin *St. Faith* belonging to it, *Anno Dom̄* 799. He departed this life *Anno Dom̄* 812, and was buried in the same Monastery." The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*<sup>7</sup> records the death of Beorhtric or Brictric in 800.

This digression is made to place Brictric in relation with the Mercian kings and also supreme over the kingdom of Mercia. For it seems possible to see in his name the clue to the derivation of the name of the village of Bricclesworde or Brixworth.

Having been called "Wolfage" after the name of a Mercian prince, Wolfade, what could be more probable than that the West Saxon King, Brictric or Beorhtric, should have a desire to remove traces of the Mercian supremacy, especially at a royal palace? And what name would do so well as his own? We can then date the possible change after the battle of Burford, in 752 or 754, and can trace in Bricclesworde of the old records the name of Brictric, King of Wessex; for by a slight change in the letters, Bricclesworde becomes Brictricesworde (*i.e.*, the warded place or estate of Brictric). This in the course of time may thus have

(1) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 80.

(2) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 86.

(3) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 96.

(4) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 94.

(5) Camden's *Britt.*, vol. i., p. 97.

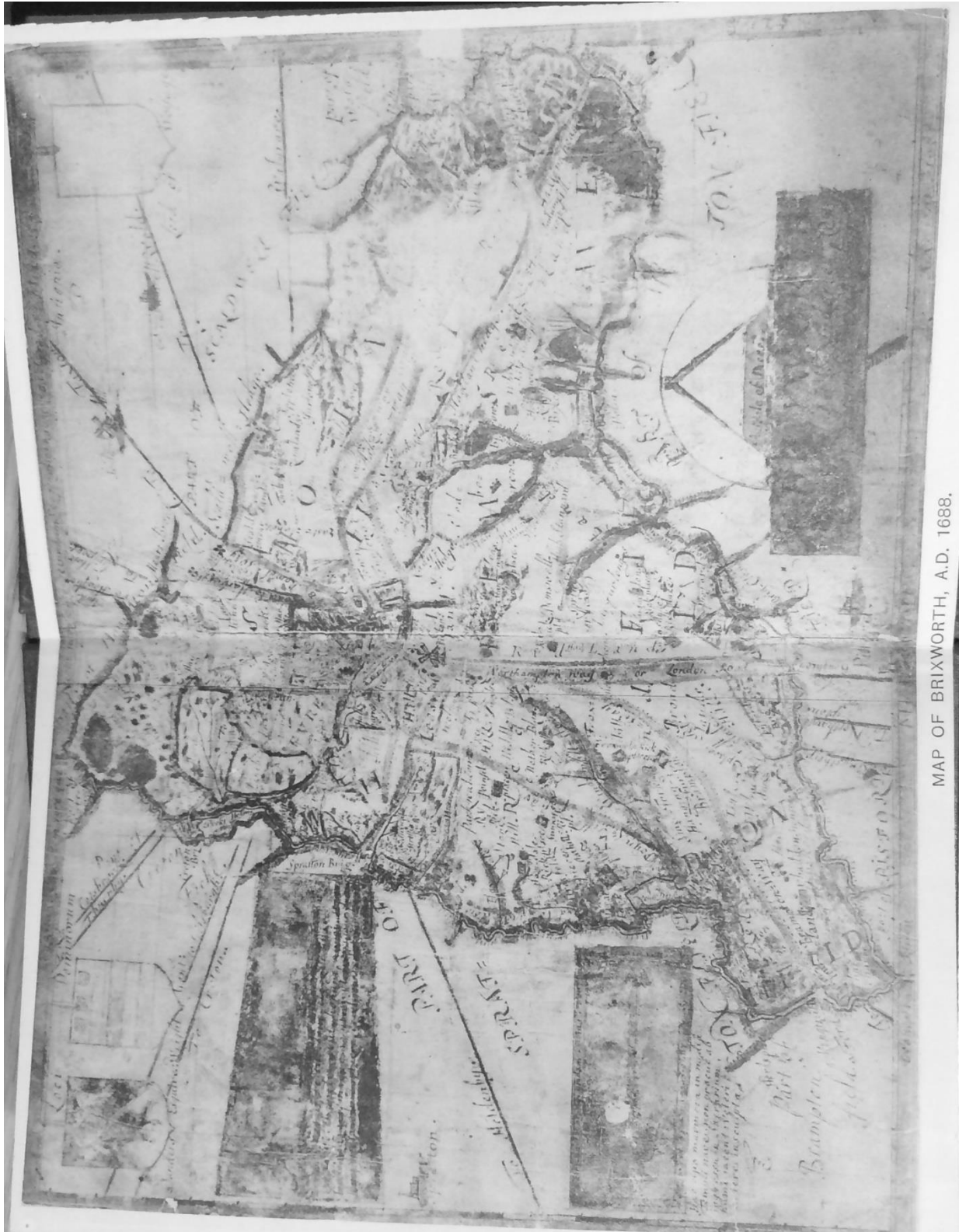
(6) Cox's *Northants*, p. 459.

(7) *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 104.



## **'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey**

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH. 7

become the modern Brixworth. Bridges,<sup>1</sup> however, gives the derivation from the plentiful supply of water on account of its numerous wells (e.g., Bartlett's Well). He writes, too, of Wolfage as if the Manor of Brixworth belonged to it, and not, as might be thought, that Wolfage belonged to the Manor of Brixworth. In evidence of this, the following is an extract from a deed dated 1770, which relates to "all that manor or lordship or reputed manor or lordship of Brixworth otherwise Wolfage in the C<sup>o</sup> of Northants with all and singular rights &c & all that toft or piece of ground whereon a capital Messuage or a Mansion House commonly called or known by the name of Wolfage, formerly stood (but was then demolished)." If the preceding statements be accepted then an answer can be found to explain their arrangement (*viz.*, that the settlement at Wolfage was older than the present site of the Village of Brixworth).

This connection of the West Saxon Kings with Brixworth appears again in a curious way, by the presence of the prebendal stall of Briclesworth in Salisbury Cathedral.<sup>2</sup> The Bishops of Winchester were, in fact, Bishops of the West Saxons. After 705, Ina, Beorhtric's predecessor, divided the large diocese, which was co-extensive with his kingdom, into the two dioceses of Wilton and Sherborne.<sup>3</sup> These were united together and formed the Diocese of Salisbury sometime between 1076 and 1078. Further, the record in *Domesday Book* is, "The King holds Briclesworde." From whom may Edward the Confessor have received it? Beorhtric was succeeded by Egbert, who became over-lord of England in 802.<sup>4</sup> He would thus become possessed of "Crown Manors," which are recorded in *Domesday*, 1086, as having been held as such in 1041.

Upon Osmund becoming Bishop of Sarum, in 1078, he built and endowed the Church of Sarum,<sup>5</sup> "in honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and the most blessed Virgin Mary." The Charter of the Cathedral was granted on April 5, 1091, and ratified at Hastings, by William II. Among the officers of the Cathedral then appointed was the *Chancellor* to govern the schools and correct the books, &c. Osmund died in 1099, and Bishop Roger was appointed in 1102 by Henry I., who gave largely to the Church at Salisbury, and confirmed his royal gifts by Charter.<sup>6</sup> Among the gifts of the King was "the Church of Briclesworde," and to the canons perpetual freedom "in all markets and fairs throughout all England, from all the tolls and customs of my dominions." (This may have some reference to the Market Cross at Brixworth.) Brixworth was thus given to the Church at Salisbury by Henry I. in 1102,

(1) Bridge's *Northants*, vol. ii., p. 80.

(2) Dodsworth's *Salisbury*, p. 1.

(3) Dodsworth's *Salisbury*, p. 16. *Anglo-Saxon Chron.*, p. 350. (4) Bridge's *Northants*, p. 80.

(5) Dodsworth's *Salisbury*, p. 98.

(6) Dodsworth's *Salisbury*, p. 102.



## 'Some Notes on the Parochial History of Brixworth' by Rev A K Pavey

Rev Alfred Katenbeck Pavey (1863-1923) was vicar of Brixworth from 1896 to 1917. Details of his career appear in 'Northamptonshire & Rutland Clergy' by Rev Henry Isham Longden, volume 10, page 203, which can be seen through this link: <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79X7-S> (free FamilySearch account required for access).

### 8 SOME NOTES ON THE PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF BRIXWORTH.

and in 1227 Henry III. confirmed this Charter, so that "nothing be taken from the canons and citizens of the liberties granted by our predecessors, Kings of England."<sup>1</sup> The Prebend of Bricclesworth became attached to the *Chancellorship*, and continued so until the appointment of the late Rev. C. F. Watkins in 1832. On July 12, 1864, under an Order in Council, three roods of land, called "Orchard Close," near the church and on part of which the schools stand (formerly belonging to the Chancellor of Salisbury), were transferred from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to the Vicar of Brixworth. The patronage was subsequently transferred to the Bishop of Peterborough. Thus by a curious chain of events Brixworth of to-day becomes connected with Bricclesworde of royal favour.

#### SUMMARY.

The results of these statements or coincidences may be considered in some degree to establish :—

- (i.) That the present village is later in date than the Church.
- (ii.) That there was a settlement in the present lordship called Wolfage for Wolfade.
- (iii.) That the distance between the Church and the settlement was united by a defined boundary between the two.
- (iv.) That the Church or part of the building was in existence before the Saxon settlement.
- (v.) That the only settlement near the Church is Roman.
- (vi.) That a possible solution to the Roman origin of the building may thus be found.
- (vii.) That the importance of Brixworth, in being chosen amongst the first to receive monks from Peterborough, was due to royal favour.
- (viii.) That the missionaries were of Celtic training.
- (ix.) That the name of the village might have been changed to Bricclesworde under the decline of the Mercian kings, and the rise of the West Saxons under Brictric or Beorhtric.
- (x.) That Brixworth continued in the possession of the Crown till the donation of Henry I. in 1102, and was then confirmed to the Church and Chancellor of Salisbury for a prebend.
- (xi.) That it continued so till 1864 in the case of land, and till 1832 (the last appointment) in the case of patronage.

I have to acknowledge, with grateful thanks, the help I have received from many sources towards this Paper, and towards the references in support of many of its statements.

(1) Dodsworth's *Salisbury*, p. 132